

HABS
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Chicago, Burlington and Quincy Railroad,
West Iowa Division-Creston Station
(Creston Municipal Complex)
116 West Adams
Creston
Union County
Iowa

HABS No. IA-150

P H O T O G R A P H S

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20240

NAME : Original. Chicago, Burlington and Quincy Railroad,
West Iowa Division - Creston Station.

Present. Creston Municipal Complex.

LOCATION : 116 West Adams
City of Creston
County of Union
State of Iowa

OWNERS : City of Creston, being used as the Creston City
Hall.

SIGNIFICANCE: The building is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and is an integral part of the town of Creston, which grew up around the railroads and received its name as a result of its location on the crest of the Iowa divide. When built, it was notable for its red tile roof, yellow brick walls and impressive green glass canopies (since removed).

PART ONE. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History

1. DATE OF ERECTION: 1899 (from photostats of the original date plans).
2. ARCHITECT: The depot was designed by the Chicago architectural firm of Burnham and Root, part of the famed Chicago school of architects, Daniel Burnham and John Wellborn. Root gained renown as designers of the first urban skyscrapers. Their work is still nationally recognized as marking a turning point in transition to modern structural and building design concepts.
3. BUILDER, CONTRACTOR, SUPPLIERS: The builder is assumed to be the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy Railroad.
4. ORIGINAL PLANS AND CONSTRUCTION: The original appearance of the building has been essentially retained with alterations to the interior as described in item number five.
5. ALTERATIONS AND ADDITIONS:
 - 1918: A new wall and boiler installed in the cellar. Coal room added.
 - 1928: The west window of the lunch room was removed and converted into an exterior door

with sidelights.

1940: A new boiler installed.

1945: Steel ladder fire escape added to front of building from attic dormer.

Date Unknown: (but after 1945) Glass canopies removed.

Individuals responsible for all above listed alterations unknown.

1977: Major restoration of the entire deteriorated exterior and major restoration, renovation and alteration of the interior spaces for re-use as the Creston City Hall.

1. Red tile roof repaired.
2. Copper cornices, gutters and trim reworked and repaired.
3. Brick and stone cleaned and restored.
4. Windows and doors restored and reactivated with insulating glass.
5. First floor waiting room and portions of corridor restored.
6. Interior of exterior walls insulated and resurfaced.
7. Some existing interior partitions removed and new floor coverings, wall surfaces and ceilings installed.
8. New heating/cooling/electrical/plumbing systems throughout.
9. Automatic sprinkling system installed.

The Architects responsible for these alterations were Wagner, Marquart, Wetherell, Ericsson, Architects of Des Moines, Iowa.

B. HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Before it was transformed into a City Hall, Creston's old depot served as the nerve center for nearly all railway business in southwest Iowa. By 1910, twenty-four passenger trains stopped at the depot daily. Sixteen of these were east-west trains, while eight served the north-south branches. In an age when rail passenger service represented the most efficient and civilized means of conveyance, Creston was an important transportation center.

Since World War II, passenger traffic declined on the Creston Division from a peak in 1943 and 1944 when twelve daily passenger trains made scheduled stops in addition to as many as ten troop trains.

Mainline passenger service declined to four per day prior to the AMTRACK takeover in 1971, and that change brought a further reduction to two per day passenger service. Meanwhile, in 1969, the railroad constructed a new passenger depot. Its modes and dimensions in contrast to the monumental seventy-year-old structure which it replaced testified to the decline in rail passenger traffic.

When the new depot was constructed, the railroad deeded the old structure to the city. Four years later, a drive began to transform the old depot into a civic center complex, and in 1974, voters approved a \$500,000 bond issue for that purpose by a three to one margin. The depot remodeling and restoration, aided by federal historic preservation and senior citizen center grants, was supervised by the Des Moines architectural firm of Wagner, Marquart, Wetherall & Ericsson. The contractor was Betts and Beer of Adair, Iowa, who completed the restoration project in 1979.

In 1980, the depot preservation won special recognition as a model for adaptive re-use at the First Annual Iowa Historic Preservation Awards ceremony, sponsored by the Iowa State Historical Department. The building's remodeled interior now contains municipal offices, public meeting rooms, and space for senior citizen congregate meals.

PART TWO. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

- A. DESCRIPTION OF EXTERIOR: The structural system is mass masonry bearing walls, wood floor joists, wood roof trusses with wrought iron tie rods, and wood roof joists. The building is of concrete footing and rubble foundation. Above the ground a cut stone base rises to the window sills; from there the walls are built of St. Louis pressed brick with stone belt courses. A heavy copper cornice caps the walls from which is pitched a semi-glazed roof broken by six dormers. The building is one hundred and seventy-one feet long by forty-three wide. From the ground level to the ridge of the roof measures fifty-three feet.
- B. DESCRIPTION OF INTERIOR: The first floor contains a 40 X 40 foot community memorial room at the west end of the building and a 36 X 45 foot community multi-purpose room (with adjacent kitchen and storage) at the east end of the building. Connecting the two community rooms is a wide central corridor running lengthwise between them. Along the north side of this corridor are the offices of the Water Department

and elevator/stair lobby. Along the south side of the corridor are the public rest rooms, the records storage room and the offices of the Creston Chamber of Commerce. The flooring of the memorial room and central corridor is polished terrazzo. The memorial room walls are glazed brick in green and cream colors with large varnished oak doors, windows and trim, while the high ceiling is of beautiful deeply recessed oak beams and panels. The offices are carpeted and the floors of the other spaces are either glazed tiles or vinyl asbestos tiles. Virtually all ceilings are suspended acoustic tiles and all walls are gypsum board walls, natural oak trim.

The second floor contains the City Council Chambers and offices for the Mayor, City Manager, Clerks, Secretaries and the Engineering Department. Virtually all the rooms on the second floor are finished with carpeted floors, painted gypsum board walls, natural oak trim, and suspended acoustic tile ceilings.

The entire building is heated and cooled with forced air from several small furnace and condensing units located within the attic space.

The entire building is protected with an automatic sprinkler system.

- C. SITE: The building faces north with the longest axis being in the east-west direction, and is located at the end of a major "T" intersection of the downtown business district. Surrounding the perimeter of the building is an attractive expanse of old paving brick walks/plazas punctuated on the north with a small planted lawn area. The building front faces downtown businesses, the back faces the busy railroad tracks, and each end faces small parking lots.

PART THREE SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- A. ARCHITECTURAL DRAWINGS: Dated 1898. reduced size prints located at City Hall, Creston, Iowa.

This report was prepared by:

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